

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

**Please amend the Claim Form and Claim as follows. Insertions are shown underlined while deletions are ~~struck through~~.**

1 (currently amended): An optical fiber connection component which comprises:

a connection member having one or ~~a plurality of~~ more through-holes each for slidably guiding an optical fibers therethrough ~~provided with~~ and guides each for slidably guiding a rodlike coupling member therethrough at or near both side edges, said through-holes and said guides extending from one side edge to another;

rodlike coupling members, and

a turned square U-shaped plug having ~~a one or more~~ one or more through-hole-(s) or a-groove (s) each for inserting ~~an the~~ an optical fiber-(s) and guide holes each for guiding the rodlike coupling members on the bottom of the concavity of square U-shape,

wherein said connection member is arranged slidably in said plug by being installed in the concavity of square U-shape of said plug by means of ~~the each~~ each rodlike coupling member inserted both in the plug and the connection member.

2 (original): The optical fiber connection component according to Claim 1 wherein said guide is a through-hole or a groove.

3 (original): The optical fiber connection component according to Claim 1 wherein said rodlike coupling member is cylindrical.

4 (original): The optical fiber connection component according to Claim 1 wherein two or more connection members are arranged in the plug.

5 (cancelled)

6 (currently amended): An optical fiber connecting method which comprises:

opposing two optical fiber connection components comprising each (i) a connection member having one or ~~a plurality of~~ more through-holes each for slidably guiding an optical fiber therethrough ~~provided with~~ and guides each for slidably guiding a rodlike coupling members at or near both side edges, said through-holes and said guides extending from one side edge to another, (ii) rodlike coupling members, and (iii) a turned square U-shaped plug having ~~a one or more~~ one or more through-hole-(s) or a-groove-(s) each for inserting ~~an the~~ an optical fiber-(s) and guide holes each for guiding the rodlike coupling

members on the bottom of the concavity of square U-shape, wherein said connection member is arranged slidably in said plug by installed in the concavity of square U-shape of said plug by means of ~~the~~ each rodlike coupling members inserted in both said plug and said connection member in such a state that the optical fibers are inserted respectively in said through-holes for optical fiber,

bringing the through-holes of both connection members face to face with each other, and

sliding said connection members in a direction of the center axis of the optical fibers along the rodlike coupling members guided by the guides, so that the optical fibers are connected in the through-hole of one connection member.

7 (original): The optical fiber connecting method according to Claim 6 wherein optical fibers inserted respectively in the through-holes of the connection members are fixed to the plugs by an adhesive.

8 (original): The optical fiber connecting method according to Claim 6 which comprises attaching said two optical fiber connection components to an adapter and bringing the through-holes of them face to face each other.

9 (currently amended): An optical fiber connection structure which is formed by

opposing two optical fiber connection components comprising each (i) a connection member having one or a ~~plurality of more~~ through-holes each for slidably guiding an optical fiber therethrough ~~provided with and guides each for slidably guiding a rodlike coupling member at or near both side edges, said through-holes and said guides extending from one side edge to another,~~ (ii) rodlike coupling members, and (iii) a turned square U-shaped plug having ~~a one or more~~ through-hole(s) or a groove(s) each for inserting an ~~the~~ optical fiber(s) and guide holes each for guiding the rodlike coupling members on the bottom of the concavity of square U-shape, wherein said connection member is arranged slidably in said plug by being installed in the concavity of square U-shape of said plug -by means of ~~the~~ each rodlike coupling members inserted in both said plug and said connection member, in such a state that the optical fibers are inserted respectively in said through-holes for the optical fibers,

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bringing the through-holes of both connection members face to face with each other, and

sliding said connection members in a direction of the center axis of the optical fibers along the rodlike coupling members guided by the guides, so that the optical fibers are connected in the through-hole of one connection member.

10 (original): The optical fiber connection structure according to Claim 9 wherein a refractive index matching agent is used for connecting the optical fibers.

11 (original): The optical fiber connection structure according to Claim 9 wherein the optical fiber connection component is fixed to an adapter.